

VZCZCXRO1169  
OO RUEHDBU RUEHDT RUEHLMC  
DE RUEHEK #0701/01 1311201  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 111201Z MAY 06  
FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7363  
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNMCT/MCC THRESHOLD COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 0560  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 1547  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0203  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE PRIORITY  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 1929  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1311  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000701

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/EUR MIKE RANGER, DS/DSS/IP JANE  
COLON, DS/IP/SCA, DSS/ITA, DS/ICI/PII, DS/OP, S/ES-O/CME,  
DS/ER/CC, DS/DSS/OSAC, DS/NEA/SA F. SCOTT GALLO, DS/DSS/IP  
KATIE PARSONS, DS/DSS/ITA JUDITH MCGINLEY, DS/IP/SA SCOTT  
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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/10/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [KCRM](#) [ASEC](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: CRIME FIGURE WITH SUSPECTED TIES TO GOVERNMENT  
MEETS (VERY) BLOODY END

REF: A. BISHKEK 503

[B](#). BISHKEK 186

[C](#). 05 BISHKEK 1555

Classified By: DCM Donald Lu, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: According to press reports and the Interior  
Ministry (MVD), notorious mob figure and parliamentary  
candidate Ryspek Akmatbayev (reftels a and b) was killed by  
unknown persons on May 10 approximately 12 kilometers outside  
of Bishkek. According to the MVD, Akmatbayev was shot 28  
times by two gunmen while exiting a mosque in the village of  
Kok-Jar. Two children inside the mosque at the time of the  
attack were also wounded by stray bullets. Over the past  
eight months, Akmatbayev had come to symbolize the alarming  
new visibility and power of organized crime in Kyrgyzstan, as  
well as the growing links between criminal figures and the  
government. His violent death, although certainly  
predictable, was a great relief to many in the Kyrgyz  
government. It remains unknown whether his death was tied to  
the removal earlier that day of National Security Service  
(SNB) Chairman Aitbayev, who was suspected by many of being  
Akmatbayev's protector. However, the timing of the murder )  
only hours after Aitbayev's dismissal ) is highly suspect.  
END SUMMARY.

VIOLENT END TO A VIOLENT MAN  
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[1](#)2. (SBU) According to various reports, Akmatbayev was gunned  
down in the village of Kok-Jar, approximately 12 kilometers  
south of Bishkek in the Alamedin Valley. PolOff, unaware of  
what had transpired two hours prior, drove by the mosque  
where Akmatbayev had been shot; there was a crowd of about  
100 just outside the front doors and about 30 cars parked  
nearby. MVD sources reported that two gunmen jumped out of a  
dark Audi and shot Akmatbayev 28 times using Kalashnikov  
rifles. Akmatbayev's numerous bodyguards reportedly ran away

as soon as the shooting started, but quickly returned and stuffed his dead body into a car before driving away to Akmatbayev's hometown of Cholpon-Ata in Issyk-Kul Oblast. Akmatbayev was reportedly buried less than a day later, on May 11. (Note: It is not yet known whether any senior government figures attended the funeral. Several cabinet officials and ranking parliamentarians attended his brother's funeral seven months ago. End note.)

MVD MINISTER: AKMATBAYEV'S CRIME NETWORK IS FINISHED

13. (C) On May 11, Interior Minister Sutalinov told the Ambassador that police had recovered the car used by Akmatbayev's killers. He said three Kalashnikov rifles were found inside, but that only two had been used. Sutalinov said that the police had a suspect (a mob rival of Akmatbayev's), but that no arrests had been made. He predicted Akmatbayev's family and associates would not cause any trouble, claiming "they've got no money, and without Ryspek the crime network is finished." Sutalinov confirmed that Akmatbayev was buried at 1400 on May 11.

NO PERSON, NO PROBLEM

14. (C) COMMENT: Many in Bishkek are breathing a huge sigh of relief at the death of Kyrgyzstan's most feared man. Beginning shortly after the death of his brother Tynychbek in October of 2005 (reftel c), Ryspek Akmatbayev came to play an increasingly visible and destabilizing role in Kyrgyz politics, with his parliamentary candidacy (and the

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President's refusal to stop him) coming to symbolize organized crime run amok, with government complicity. That the government was unable or unwilling to rein him in, along with the fact that President Bakiyev and other officials repeatedly refused even in private to condemn Akmatbayev (while defending and even praising him publicly) led many observers to believe that Bakiyev was either blackmailed by or otherwise beholden to Akmatbayev. In the end, there is no question that Akmatbayev had become a major political liability for President Bakiyev, due to the significant damage he had done to Bakiyev's image.

15. (C) COMMENT CONT'D: Although Akmatbayev had countless enemies in the criminal underworld, it has not gone unnoticed that he was killed the same day President Bakiyev sacked SNB Chairman Tashtemir Aitbayev. Political observers in Bishkek are almost unanimous in their belief that Akmatbayev and Aitbayev were somehow linked (the two actually spoke face to face in public during a March 31 Ryspek-led demonstration in Bishkek), with many claiming that Aitbayev had for years been acting as Akmatbayev's "krysha" (his protector, in Russian mob slang). Many had speculated that even the perception that Akmatbayev was being protected by either the SNB or the Presidential Administration served to shield him from his many criminal rivals. In this sense, Aitbayev's dismissal could have been tantamount to giving Akmatbayev's mob-world enemies a green light to go after him.

16. (C) COMMENT CONT'D: It remains altogether possible that senior government figures were likewise somehow involved, though no specific information is known at this time that would support such a theory. Akmatbayev had threatened to kill Prime Minister Kulov. Minister of Interior Sutalinov has spoken passionately about his hatred for Akmatbayev, whom he blames for the killing of a fellow senior police officer. The fact that Akmatbayev's considerable security detail turned and ran at the first sign of trouble could imply that they too might have been somehow involved in the murder. Regardless, Akmatbayev's death is likely to be a great relief to the Bakiyev Administration.

17. (C) COMMENT CONT'D: It is less clear what will happen

next. According to MVD contacts, Akmatbayev's family and mob underlings, having lost their leader, are running scared and are unlikely to cause any trouble in the near future. Akmatbayev's death could well cause a near-term scramble for control of his considerable business assets and organized crime network, touching off yet another round of tit-for-tat mob killings. It is also unclear as yet what role, if any, Akmatbayev's remaining brother will try to play. On the other hand, his death could also lead to an easing of tensions between President Bakiyev and the opposition, in that Bakiyev's unwillingness or inability to stop Akmatbayev had become one of the opposition's primary rallying calls against Bakiyev.

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